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at 3 p.m.
New York

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 2nd MEETING

Chairman: Mr. MONGBE (Benin)

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The meeting was called to order at 3.30 p.m.

ELECTION OF OFFICERS

1. The CHAIRMAN informed the Committee that the group of Latin American and Caribbean States had nominated Mr. Arellano Resendiz (Mexico) for one of the posts of Vice-Chairman.

2. Mr. Arellano Resendiz (Mexico) was elected Vice-Chairman by acclamation.

3. The CHAIRMAN said that the election of the remaining Vice-Chairman and the Rapporteur would be postponed to a later meeting.

ORGANIZATION OF WORK (A/48/250 and Add.1, A/C.2/48/1, A/C.2/48/L.1 and Add.1)

4. The CHAIRMAN drew attention to a letter dated 24 September 1993 from the President of the General Assembly to the Chairman of the Second Committee (A/C.2/48/1) concerning the allocation of items to the Committee, noting that the Committee had been allocated two new items: item 41 entitled "Emergency international assistance for peace, normalcy and reconstruction of war-stricken Afghanistan" and item 154 entitled "United Nations interim offices". In addition, he drew the Committee's attention to several actions taken by the General Assembly on the basis of recommendations contained in the first report of the General Committee concerning the organization of the forty-eighth regular session (A/48/250) aimed at streamlining the consideration of agenda items and enhancing the efficiency of the work of the Main Committees. In view of the reduced number of meetings available to the Committee during the current session, it had also been suggested that the time-limit on statements during the general debate should be 10 minutes and that on statements on agenda items should be 5 minutes instead of 15 and 10 minutes respectively.

5. Mr. AMAZIANE (Morocco), supported by Miss JANJUA (Pakistan), said that one of the important characteristics of the United Nations was that it provided a forum for debate, especially for countries of the Third World. His delegation attached particular importance to the general debate and would prefer to streamline the agenda rather than change the time-limit on statements. Furthermore, the two days allocated to the general debate seemed insufficient, since that debate provided the only real opportunity to address economic and financial problems in an integral and exhaustive manner.

6. The CHAIRMAN said that he would request the Bureau and Secretariat to extend the allotted time for the general debate by one day. He took it that the Committee wished to approve the proposed new time-limits.

7. It was so decided.

8. The CHAIRMAN appealed to members of the Secretariat to circulate the full text of their statements in advance and to present a concise summary orally to the Committee. Delegations should also follow that practice.

9. Delegations interested in participating in the general discussion of a given item should inscribe their names on the list of speakers as early as

(The Chairman)

possible, and in the time slots available, instead of all trying to speak on the last day allocated to a given item, and should stick to the order in which they were listed. If a speaker was absent when it was his or her turn to speak, that delegation would automatically be moved to the end of the list of speakers for the meeting.

10. Delegations should adhere to the established deadlines for submitting draft proposals under the various items in order to enable the Committee to complete its work on time. All delegations should cooperate with him and the other members of the Bureau in order to ensure that the Committee concluded its work by the target date of Friday, 10 December.

11. Ms. KELLEY (Secretary of the Committee) said that item 41, on emergency international assistance for peace, normalcy and reconstruction of war-stricken Afghanistan, should be considered together with items 100 and 101.

12. Mr. JARAMILLO (Colombia), speaking on behalf of the Group of 77, said that it was his understanding that the General Committee had recommended that item 154 should be considered together with item 94 on operational activities; the Second Committee should adhere to that recommendation. He hoped that documents would be issued in a timely fashion in all the official languages of the United Nations. If possible, the Secretariat should provide the Committee with a breakdown of the specific items that would be considered under item 12, which dealt with the report of the Economic and Social Council.

13. Mr. FERNANDEZ DE COSSIO DOMINGUEZ (Cuba) and Miss JANJUA (Pakistan) supported the statement made by the representative of Colombia.

14. Mrs. YANG Yanyi (China) agreed that agenda item 154 and 94 should be considered together.

15. Mr. STOBY (Director, Department for Policy Coordination and Sustainable Development) said that the General Assembly had merely allocated item 154 to the Second Committee; it had not said anything about items 154 and 94 being considered together. That was for the Committee to decide.

16. Mr. PORTOCARERO (Belgium), speaking on behalf of the European Community and its Member States, said that the proposed clustering of items was in many respects not ideal; the Committee should endeavour to cluster items logically. Since item 154 contained elements that did not relate to operational activities it should not be considered together with item 94.

17. Ms. TOMKINSON (Australia) suggested the following clustering of closely related items in order to streamline the Committee's agenda: one cluster on macroeconomic and broad economic issues could include the sub-items on entrepreneurship and trade and development. Another cluster could be devoted to micro-economic and sectoral issues, including women in development, human resources development, implementation of the Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the 1990s, economic and technical cooperation among developing countries and science and technology for development. A third cluster on global plans, strategies and agendas for development might logically include the report of the Secretary-General on an agenda for development, the

(Ms. Tomkinson, Australia)

Declaration on International Economic Cooperation, implementation of the International Development Strategy for the Fourth United Nations Development Decade and international cooperation for the eradication of poverty in developing countries, since the issue of poverty was at the heart of all global development plans and strategies. The item on special programmes of economic assistance could be combined with the items on the International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction, on assistance to specific countries, including Angola, El Salvador, Afghanistan and Croatia, and on Chernobyl. Lastly, a cluster of items on the environment might include desertification and drought, implementation of decisions and recommendations of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, the international convention to combat desertification, the Global Conference on the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States and the United Nations Conference on Straddling Fish Stocks and Highly Migratory Fish Stocks. Human settlements might also be discussed at that time. The amalgamation of items would depend to some extent on whether or not documentation could be ready by the required date, and that it would not preclude the drafting of separate texts or the holding of separate negotiations on individual items.

18. Mr. JOMAA (Tunisia) said that his delegation supported the proposals of the representative of Australia. It was his understanding that the five-minute time-limit applied to statements on individual items, not clusters of items.

19. Mr. GOUDIMA (Ukraine) said that his delegation could not agree to the proposals and wished to adopt the programme of work as proposed by the Secretariat in document A/C.2/48/L.1.

20. Mr. MOHAMED (Sudan) requested confirmation as to whether agenda item 100 on special programmes of economic assistance would indeed be discussed on 16 November, as a special speaker was scheduled to arrive for the debate.

21. Mr. FERNANDEZ DE COSSIO DOMINGUEZ (Cuba) noted that the Group of 77 had clearly stated, in the debates of the General Committee, the procedural and political arguments for considering item 154 on United Nations interim offices together with item 94 on operational activities for development.

22. Mr. COSTA (Brazil) noted that consideration of the report of the Secretary-General on an agenda for development had been deferred from 12 October to early December because documentation would not be ready on time. Since the report of the Secretary-General on the work of the Organization indicated that "An agenda for development" would set out the United Nations approach to development in full (A/48/1, para. 120) and since great importance had been attached to the issue in the general debate in plenary it might be appropriate to begin discussing it earlier and to devote more time to it. Perhaps delegations could make some initial comments at the beginning of the debate on item 91, without prejudice to their right to make further comments in December.

23. Mr. PAPADATOS (Greece) said that the Australian proposal, while commendable, did not tackle the root of the problem, namely, the Committee's seeming inability to establish and adhere strictly to its programme of work. Representatives arriving from foreign capitals and the six or seven ministers who addressed the Committee every year must be given specific dates in order to

(Mr. Papadatos, Greece)

make travel and hotel arrangements. If United Nations officials were unable to address the Committee on the date they were scheduled to do so they should send other Secretariat members in their place.

24. Mr. STOBY (Director, Department for Policy Coordination and Sustainable Development) said that, while the Australian proposal had great merit, it did not sufficiently take into account the timing and availability of documentation. Furthermore, the addition of items and sub-items to already existing clusters would reduce the amount of time available to discuss each one under the new five-minute time-limit. Consideration of the report of the Secretary-General on an agenda for development had been deferred and proposed as a separate item in order to allow more time for the Secretary-General to obtain the views of delegations. Thus far, only five replies had been received to a note verbale sent to delegations in the spring, requesting them to submit their view. If delegations wished to express their views during the general debate of the Second Committee, that would also provide valuable input to the Secretary-General in the preparation of his report.

25. Mr. RAMADAN (Egypt) noted that only one morning and one afternoon had been set aside for consideration of item 96 on the International Conference on Population and Development. Since there would be no draft resolution or informal meetings on the subject at the current session, the Committee should allow more time for the consideration of the item in order to give all delegations an opportunity to express their views on the final document for the Conference.

26. Ms. KELLEY (Secretary of the Committee), responding to the Egyptian representative, noted that if the two meetings devoted to the item on the International Conference on Population and Development were not sufficient, it could be discussed during the informal consultations to be held throughout the Committee's programme of work. Replying to the representative of Colombia, she said that document A/48/252, to be issued shortly, would provide details on the allocation of items to each Committee, including which items relating to the work of the Economic and Social Council would be considered by the Second Committee and which by the Third Committee. Finally, she assured the Sudanese representative that item 100 would indeed be considered on 16 November and that the documentation would be available.

27. The CHAIRMAN, noting that both the European Community and its member States and the Group of 77 held strong views on the extremely sensitive question of United Nations interim offices, suggested that the Committee should adopt its programme of work and hold further consultations prior to its third meeting in order to take into account requests made on that specific item. In view of the importance of the item "An agenda for development" and the practical considerations outlined by Mr. Stoby, the Committee might begin informal discussions some time in October and defer its formal consideration of the item until the report of the Secretary-General had been issued.

28. Mr. PORTOCARERO (Belgium), Mr. ALIOU (Cameroon) and Mr. AMAZIANE (Morocco) said that they agreed to the Chairman's proposal.

29. Mr. JARAMILLO (Colombia), speaking on behalf of the Group of 77, said that he was prepared to begin the consultations right away. The question of United Nations interim offices was extremely sensitive for the developing countries, since it was in those countries that the offices would be opened.

30. The CHAIRMAN suggested that the Secretariat should be asked to revise the Committee's proposed programme of work in the light of the comments made by delegations so that the Committee could consider the revised document at its next meeting.

31. It was so decided.

The meeting rose at 6 p.m.